



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL FOR WORKFORCE  
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
EDUCATION. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. EMPLOYMENT.

**Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development  
OKLAHOMA WORKFORCE YOUTH COUNCIL**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** April 4, 2014

**Time:** 12:00 p.m.

**Place:** Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City, 900 N. Portland Ave., Oklahoma City, OK

**Call to Order/Welcome and Introductions**

Co-chairs Chuck Mills and Jeff Pritchard welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending. The Career Pathways Committee is also attending today because they were asked to come and hear Jeff Downs' proposal on the Educator Professional Development Campaign.

Chuck also mentioned that they were going to take a look at the membership of the Youth Council to make sure that we have everyone we need represented on it. He would like to recruit a couple of youths to join the Council. The membership has changed a lot over the years and many people have resigned or are not attending.

**Minutes**

John Hawkins made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2014 meeting. Gilbert Hall seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**Project Discussion**

Chuck Mills explained that Jeff Downs, State Dept. of Education, proposed a project that he felt would be in line with the Strategic Plan of the Youth Council. The project is for professional development to occur on all sides of the spectrum, bringing individual partners to the table. He asked the Career Pathways (CP) Committee to attend because this ties in nicely with a lot of what they are doing and the Youth Council would like their input on the project. Chuck asked Gordon Andersen, co-chair of the CP Committee what his thoughts were.

Gordon said that the CP Committee has been working on the adoption of Career Pathways in the state. The CP concept encompasses in a lot of ways with Jeff's project. He said that several of them on the CP Committee have met and discussed Jeff's proposal and they are all for it although the whole committee hasn't had an opportunity to see it. He has no doubt that the Committee would approve it and the reason they are at the Youth Council meeting today is to see what they can do to work with the Youth Council to make all of this happen.

Jeff Downs gave a brief overview of the project. The objective of the project is to facilitate and oversee the creation and implementation of an industry relevant K-12 education career pathway awareness campaign and professional development program that is comprehensive, but yet developmentally age and grade level appropriate.

The overarching goal of the project is to create Oklahoma career awareness and industry relevancy with Oklahoma educators. The main objective of the project will be to forge strong public/private partnership

opportunities for school districts and their local wealth generating industries to engage in. As a collaborative partnership, teams will be formed to create a comprehensive professional development program that will embed relevant career pathway awareness and guidance into new emerging instructional practices that will be used in Oklahoma classrooms. The project will include a timeline detailing the project from drawing board to full implementation, a complete list of human and capital resources, as well as any and all fiscal impacts to consider. Jeff reiterated that the curriculum will be embedded into classes, not just an “add-on” or Career Day, but students will build on relevant experiences. The five ecosystems will be targeted.

The Youth Council can help with laying the foundation of the project; draft up an MOU with partners and be clear what we expect from the partners and everyone will be on the same page. Jeff is asking for partnerships with industry, education, superintendents, representatives of college education, etc. He believes that the Youth Council can be instrumental in forging the partnerships.

The Youth Council, along with the help of the Career Pathways Committee, could be the Executive Team who would design the comprehensive plan, goals and objectives of the project, etc. Jeff Downs said the State Department of Education is going to be behind this 100%.

He explained that he was an educator for ten years as well as a dean of a middle school. A lot of experience he had as an educator was that it didn't have a lot to do with real-world relevancy. The instruction that they were charged to put together was geared around a test, it was geared around with trying to get through the curriculum, to make sure they had appropriate test scores for the kids and that the kids were going to go on to the next grade level. In his classes, he taught kids the relevancy of money; how it's spent and saved, how to write checks, etc. In his older classes (7<sup>th</sup> grade), he taught them the same kinds of things and the math concepts and what careers out there they could latch onto. He said you could see the kid's faces light up when they could see the relevancy.

There are so many people out there – kids, teachers, parents – that don't even know what STEM is or don't have a clue about career pathways. We need training. We need a professional development program or platform to change the conversation – to change the way we're instructing. We need to not just talk to the in-service teachers but we need to build something down to the pre-service level so that the teachers who are coming up through the system that are going to replace the ones that are going to leave eventually, have the same idea and the same concept.

Jeff said that we need to educate educators as to what the business world is like and that is where the MOU comes in. If we don't have a plan or a solid commitment, then it won't get accomplished. This formalizes the partnership and what we are going to accomplish together. This is not another program that we rolling out to educators, we are embedding this into classes. The charge is pulling together the stakeholders from every aspect of our community – teachers, parents, business and industry. Through the Professional Development Training, the Career Pathways Framework (which was adopted by the Governor's Council) would be used as a tool that we could utilize and get out to the public so people would know what Career Pathway is all about. Jeff stated that the SDE is doing regional trainings right now. We could regionalize the state. They have the Reach Network where the state is divided up into eight regions so the regions are already set. The Reach Network encompasses the school districts and they can do a search around that region of what businesses and industries are there and they can start marketing our plan to those business people and start delivering the MOUs to those folks who want to come to the table and create this conversation change and entirely new way of instruction.

The initiative is an engagement from the start from writing it, creating it, implementing it, and facilitating it. This is a mammoth of a project but Jeff views the Youth Council as the ones who will create the framework and the real heart of it will be on the Implementation and Writing Team. They will be the ones responsible for going out and gathering the support for this. It will be our job to get the meetings together, to facilitate them and pick the districts that we want to start this project out with.

An example of how this would work is an MOU would be delivered to a superintendent of a local school district. It would be tailored fit to that local school district's responsibilities and business and industry. We need to flush out the expectations, etc. This is not grade level specific.

Jeff referred to a sample survey he distributed with possible questions that could be asked. This would be sent to all stakeholders for their input. He wants it to be a non-intimidating survey with no more than ten questions that would give us some powerful information about where to start. It could be customized to different areas of the state. This would give us a snapshot of understanding. Jeff said that he wants to aim small to begin with. The results of the survey will help us understand where to start a professional development plan. He can tailor fit a half day program to address what career pathways are about to teachers. If the surveys come back and they don't know what career pathways are on the majority of the surveys, then he can tailor fit his program to address those gaps. He would like the Youth Council to break up into the groups and come up with some questions for the survey.

Vikki Dearing said that she would like to know what Kelly Arrington thinks because she is from Career Tech and has worked in this arena for a long time.

Kelly said that as far as understanding what career pathways are, she thinks there is probably a very small segment that understands that and who are working with those kinds of things - Career Tech and certain educational sectors. When we say career pathways, there is a very small number who really know what we are talking about. Even when we say career pathways to people in that arena, it could mean two different things. Sometimes the common language can be difficult in education, but when you add business and industry, that's an even bigger gap.

Jeff would like to see more involvement between Career Tech and K-12 because a lot of K-12 educators aren't aware of the Career Tech programs. People still call it vo-tech. So this professional development training is as much a relationship building program as it is educational.

Clark Southard asked Jeff how does he want the Career Pathways Committee to assist him/Youth Council on this project? Jeff said the work that they have already done, they don't want to re-do it. Jeff wants their expertise brought to the table to help sculpt this program, utilizing the tools that may need to be tweaked here and there and put those into play. He doesn't want this proposal to replace anything, but to kick it into gear.

Jeff Pritchard commented to Clark Southard that they have had success in Duncan and we would like their input in how they did it. Our vision is for it to go statewide. We would like to have successful pilots in different areas of the state. People will see the success and want to join in. That way it won't be something that's mandated by the State Department of Education. Jeff Downs said the purpose of the MOU is to grow from both directions and it's from the top part, the superintendent level, where the commitment part is. He also wants it from the grass roots level so we are reaching teachers and communities. He wants it to be statewide but he wants to work first with the ones who want to do this. Once people see how well it is working, it will be contagious and others will want to join in. He said this is a strategic thing so we can get this off and running on a deadline timeline date because it will take about a year to get it going.

Vikki told the CP Committee members that this work was not replacing what they are already doing, but it is just a piece of it and they would continue with the other work that they are doing.

Chuck Mills said that we will need to market this initiative and create an awareness campaign. He thinks that we should skip the survey and just go to the meat of it. We can encourage them to help themselves with the programs that we've developed and to help themselves with having more skilled workers available by getting involved and making a difference in the future.

Marilyn Feaver suggested that we contact some of the folks who have already expressed interest in CP who attended the conference last year. She has a list of names that they haven't had time to follow up on. Jeff Downs said that is what he would like to do. He did reiterate that he didn't want to make it grade level specific. He said we could do 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade in Duncan and capitalize on what's being done there. Then go to Shawnee or Muskogee for example, and develop something for the middle school level and hone our professional development around middle school teachers. Then go to another part of the state and focus on elementary teachers.

Jeff asked the group if they wanted to do the survey or just assume that nobody knows what career pathways are and start from there? He said he was more interested in developing the MOU piece today than the survey because to him it is a partnership agreement and without a partnership agreement, we can't expect for something to have success. The Youth Council decided to not do the survey.

Jeff D. said that Chuck had mentioned that we need to do an awareness campaign and it is a big piece to make our educators aware of this but we also need to talk to the parents and start getting them engaged. We need to bring them in as stakeholders. Putting together a marketing campaign is huge about what our issues are and what we want the parents to be talking to their kids about. Kim Osmani mentioned doing a video clip. He said we could do a kindergarten classroom where the kids are sitting in class morphing into adults and actually hold positions in the state. They all started in Kindergarten. How did they get to where they are today? By being on a career pathway, because they weren't born they were educated, they made decisions and they had guidance from the adults in their lives to get there. That's exactly what he wants this whole thing to be.

Vikki Dearing said the Dream It. Do It. program for manufacturing is exactly what Jeff is talking about. The idea is to get students, educators and parents knowledgeable and involved and moving forward in related manufacturing careers. They have been doing some great innovative things in northeast Oklahoma. They have some great models that we could take a look at.

Norma Noble asked Jeff what's the next step if we already have communities interested in doing Career Pathways? Muskogee for example is ready to get involved. If the communities have already signed up and said they were interested and they already know what CP is, then we may be able to identify elements for the youth. If not, then we may need to take a step backwards to how do we get there. Jeff said also we may want to consider those informational videos because we are going to have to go to these communities when we create the framework and present this information to them.

Leroy Walker suggested that at the next meeting Jeff could put together what he has and condense it down to a certain point so everyone can see a snapshot of it. They could see what's being done in the state and give them an idea of what's already out there. Jeff Prichard said that they talked about best practices at the last meeting to see what's being done. Leroy said that Muskogee can just use what's being done already and implement their own.

Chuck Mills said that Tim Burg from Shawnee said that he was going to do it and Chuck said that he was also going to organize it here and not wait on the franchise model to get started. He went to the conference last year and what affected him the most was when a teacher got up and said that she had been teaching for 20 years and this is the first time that she has ever been excited to go to her job to teach. He said that speaks volumes.

Marilyn Feaver said that they feel pretty strongly that you cannot get this started easily in a community if you don't have the school superintendent on board and excited about it. Jeff Downs said that's why he feels it's important to do an MOU. You have to get the superintendent on-board and then figure out how to market it at the grass roots level to get the educators, parents and community on-board. Jeff is afraid if we spin our wheels, we won't get anything accomplished. If we are going to do an inventory, then he wants something else happening at the same time. He doesn't want to take two months to figure out what's going on, then

come back and discuss it, then figure out what we are going to do next, because before you know it, it will be December and nothing's been done. Jeff said you can form a committee to do an inventory of what is going on around the state and another committee to work on the MOUs. That's the key to getting it done.

Chuck Mills asked Marilyn if they knew what people or communities are interested in pursuing career pathways. Marilyn said they do – for instance, they had a team go to Durant and speak to the community there. They had close to 30 people there in Durant and they want to do it. Rush Springs said they wanted to do something. Midwest City is very interested. Marilyn said they have a list of at least 20 plus teams that attended the conference and have expressed interest.

Clark Southard said that when they were doing the project with Commerce, they mapped out the communities in the state of Oklahoma where they could jump from a quadrant in the southwest to full state coverage. They did this by picking (by committee) cities and towns that were good targets. It's been mapped out two years ago now. He could probably find that information and cross reference it with the attendees from the Career Pathways Conference a year ago and that should give a resulting. That would be the committees that he would recommend that you look at first. We could revisit the schools that they had honed done to once before instead of reinventing the process. They could probably provide that information within a couple of weeks to the Youth Council and the committees can decide if they want to pursue them or not.

Marilyn said that Career Pathways got started in Duncan when they went to visit the WIB down there. Jeff Pritchard said that they (Seminole) are going to have a CP meeting and he has asked Pam Hunnicutt, East Central WIB Director, to come to the meeting. Pam was at the CP conference last year. Marilyn said that they have people from the SOIC team who are willing to go speak to any group, community, etc. to explain the initiative. They can be at Seminole if Jeff wants them to come. Terry Watson said that SOIC has a tool kit that they developed – a quick start guide – that is available.

Jeff Pritchard said that while there is still a little time left today, he would like for the group to work on the MOU. He suggested that they divide up into two groups and discuss best practices and the MOU. Since time was getting short, Jeff Downs suggested that they take the MOU idea and send all of our ideas in through e-mail and compile them before the next meeting and have that as results that we can feed to everybody and at the same time we have the inventory suggestion going on at the same time. Chuck Mills said that he would like to do it right now because once everyone leaves it will be hard to sit down and reprogram your mind for what we are talking about here. We have the players here right now so let's talk about it now and lock it down.

Norma suggested that for the best practices to have everyone e-mail their information to Jeane and Vikki. Vikki suggested the e-mails come to her because the CP Committee is doing a project on best practices and have put a proposal together and is already compiling a list. Chuck suggested that Vikki pick a chair and add some Youth Council members to the committee to help them since they have already started on it.

Jeff Pritchard asked Clark if they used an MOU or any type of document that they had signed. Clark said they did not. Clark said that they had what he calls the soft actualization of the community. That includes the businesses and the schools that are there - the supporting structure. An MOU wasn't necessary there but he's not going to tell you not to have one. You just have to have buy-in and that was one of their public advocacy requirements was to go out and beat the streets until we had leadership buy-in from all the levels in the area. You could create an MOU that simply serves as a checklist for yourself. Clark said the he has always believed that if it is not a mandated, regulatory, policy-driven requirement from the top down, it isn't going to happen in the long run across the state level. So, when picking a local community, an MOU is a nice thing to have, but it's not a requirement. For the MOU, perhaps you can use the Quick Start Guide to start with.

Chuck said since it is sometimes hard to get the superintendents on board, maybe we could get all of the partners to sign on first and take it to the superintendents and tell them they are the key component needed

to make it work. Gilbert said we should get our school boards on board too because they can tell the superintendents what to do. Marilyn added that what helped in Duncan is the economic developers really got involved which helped the businesses get involved. The economic developers have a relationship with businesses where the school boards might not.

Jeff Downs said that maybe instead of developing an MOU we should do something that's more of a partner list. Maybe we should get all of the partners together into a common room and present the idea to them, and get them to sign off on a partner list because they are all engaged. When we leave and from that point forward, we have the agreement and can say— you are a partner in this because during that presentation, we told you that you were going to have to commit your time, commit your human resources, and commit your expertise to the whole project, not to just a piece of the project. Chuck said that he likes that idea because it is less formal. Jeff added that it is still a document if the superintendent leaves or if there is a change in the school board, there is still something on record that says we are still going to move forward.

Kerry Manning asked if we were at the point where we can go out and start talking about this initiative because she wants to do this somewhere in the Southern Workforce area. Jeff thinks we are ready to roll. Marilyn said that she would share their PowerPoint with Kerry.

Connie Lake with the State Regents said that she wants to offer three different groups that someone can speak to:

- Council of Presidents – Presidents of the Higher Ed institutions in the state - meet monthly
- Council on Instruction – Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs – meet monthly
- Economic Development Council – Chief of Economic Development at their institutions – meet monthly

Connie said that whenever someone is ready to make the pitch, let her know and she will try and get them on one or all of their agendas.

Jeff thinks that is a great idea, but he has one question to the Youth Council. Are we talking about pitching an idea or a product? The Council said they are committed to pitching a product. Pitching a product in a room full of stakeholders is a whole lot different than pitching an idea. To pitch the product, you would need to list all the things from A-Z that needs to be done, talk about each aspect of the product, each thing that the product is intended to do and from that pitch of the product, that's where our partner list comes in for them to sign. Vikki asked Jeff if he was pitching professional development of educators or career pathways. He said to him it is the same. It is professional development for teachers so they can understand how to embed career pathways in education. The professional development will also be for superintendents, school administrators, and everyone who touches kids in the K-12 system. This is what they are going to pitch. So it is up to the Youth Council to create that product. We are not changing curriculum but the instructional practices that teach to the standards is what we're asking them to teach to. Part of the tools that we'll put together will be the instructional practices for embedding it.

Connie Lake asked who among the Youth Council are experts in teaching methodologies and Jeff said that's why we will bring the Teacher Prep Colleges to the table. That is part of the elements that he wanted to include in the MOU that we would deliver to the presidents of the universities and to the deans of the colleges. We will need their help to accomplish the initiative.

Jeff explained that his proposal lists two teams; Executive Team and the Implementation and Program Writing Team. The Executive Team creates from the idea to the framework. Once the framework is completed, we bring in the experts to add the components that are needed. Connie thinks the colleges will take exception to that if they are not included in the framework discussion. We could reach out to one or two colleges and include them then they can say with confidence to their peers that they were part of that discussion which would add to the credibility of the framework. She feels that you may have the cart before the horse if you don't have that conversation. Jeff agreed.

Gilbert Hall thinks that Connie may be right but he feels that this has been broken for a long time and will it ever get fixed if we start trying to appease everyone so they won't feel left out? Chuck Mills said that we have to start with the end first (Stephen Covey) and then go to them and say, here's the goal, we need your help in getting there. He said for us to get our act together first then we can find the people to make it happen. We are about there to have them help us. Jeff said that we should just follow the philosophy that we've been discussing here for a while and that is to work with those ones who want to work with us.

Jeff Downs said to sum it up, it was decided not to have an MOU but just a partner's agreement and we develop a framework that we can take on the road and show people what it's all about.

Clark Southard said that he was volunteering the Career Pathways Committee /Manufacturing Committee and specifically the Public Advocacy sub-committee, of which he is the chair, to support Jeff and the Youth Council in their efforts.

#### **Old Business**

None.

#### **New Business**

None.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be announced at a later date.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Linda Emrich*